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The pattern that emerges from these reports may be briefly summarized. A serious illness would overtake some member of one of the small semi-nomadic bands. An effort was made to explain the illness in terms of bewitchment and generally some child or youth of either sex was fixed upon as the guilty party. Often the child confessed to the crime which he did not understand. "Kid not smart," Sam Bob explained. "You talk to kid, 'You witch?' Maybe say, 'Yes.' That kid big, he wouldn't speak a word." Sometimes the confessed witch was killed or else he might starve to death. If the suspect refused to admit his guilt he was tortured until he confessed. The commonest means of torture seems to have been by tying up the suspected individual, sometimes hanging him up by the heels and starving him. The remarkable thing that comes out of the data is that the captivity and torture were often undertaken by a member of the suspect's family, again either a man or a woman. A mature person often sought to escape the charge of bewitchment by leveling suspicion on a child. During periods when witch-fear was prevalent people were afraid of being accused of the deed and of having guilt placed on their children. Mutual suspicion was rife and people watched their children carefully.

From this synthetic reconstruction it is clear that the Kaska's belief in witchcraft is best described as witch-fear, since there is no evidence of any Indian ever actually practicing witchcraft nor were the forms of such behavior apparently even ideally patterned in great detail. Thus witch-fear for the Kaska may be defined as an attempt to fix blame for malignancy upon one person for some definite injury to another. Certain other features of Kaska witch-fear may be pointed out. Very often it was not the supposed victim who sought to fix this blame but his relatives and friends. Furthermore all suspicion of witchcraft was localized within the community and often within the family. Blame did not depend upon any previous expression of enmity between victim and witch, for frequently suspicion fell on a child who could not easily have originated or been the subject of such hostility. Finally there was no elaboration of techniques for countering the attack of witchcraft. Shamanism had practically disappeared from the society and oracles were not consulted to determine witches. The sole remedy appeared to lie in securing the confession of the witch and/or bringing about his death. It therefore follows that witchcraft was not a commonplace or "normal" phenomenon in Kaska society as it is, or was, among the African Azande or California Yokuts and Western Mono.[11]

Although Dan, Jimmy, and Clem Loots are still living in Lower Post, efforts to persuade them to talk about witch-fear or witchcraft were unsuccessful. A number of other informants expressed impatience when questioned about this behavior and pointed out that they knew nothing of witches. They

[11] Evans-Pritchard, 1937; Gayton, 1936, p. 409.

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ties were weak and unformalized. When a band through marriage secured members of another dialect division (i.e., tribe) the affinal kinship ties were apt to be riddled by considerable distrust. Even today relations between dialect groups are apt to be strained although considerable marriage has taken place between them. Thus on its peripheries the band was extremely unstable and possessed few mechanisms for cementing relationships with other bands. Between such units only more distant blood and affinal kinship ties operated, and here the emotional factor needed to reinforce kinship ties in a society where interpersonal relations are not strictly formalized was even more minimal. Covert interpersonal hostility was congruent to and almost inevitable in such a social structure wherein the individual literally felt he could depend on nobody but himself and in which mistrust rapidly mounted beyond the nuclear family. Obviously, therefore, relatives and neighbors often failed to inspire confidence or security and numerous possibilities for suspicion of malevolence were available. In the absence of any organized chieftainship such antagonisms were primarily subject to individual control in accordance with the ideals of the society.

This analysis has not yet directly explained one important feature of Kaska witch-fear. Why was suspicion of witchcraft so often directed against children? In part the answer may lie in the fact that adults often circumvented accusations by placing the blame for alleged bewitchment on defenseless children. A psychological explanation underlying such behavior can be found in the fact that the Kaska's timidity in interpersonal relations and the correlated deference patterning manifest adult relations made it undesirable to arouse direct hostility.[23] Children, therefore, were safer targets for accusations. Finally we must look to the society's attitudes toward children. The inhibition of demonstrative affection to children has already been pointed out and would seem to point to ambivalence as regards children. An interpretation of conflicting attitudes toward offspring is strengthened by the evidence that some women do not want children and this is related to expressions of masculine striving in some female members of the contemporary society. There are more socially patterned techniques for inducing sterility and contraception than there are means of promoting fecundity. It becomes conceivable, therefore, that a woman who was emotionally withdrawn and unconsciously ambivalent in her attitude toward children could assist in the torture of her own or a relative's child. Emotional rejection, it must be pointed out, is not correlated with conscious hostility toward children and of course not all parents demonstrated hostility to children. Many greatly feared the hysterical outbreaks of witch-fear and witch-hunting and sought to protect their families by removing them from the area.

[23] Kluckhohn has found fear of witchcraft among the Navaho to be associated with only a slight incidence of overt interpersonal aggression. (Kluckhohn, 1944, p. 53.)